

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2017

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HOUSE BILL 894
PROPOSED COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE H894-CSMU-7 [v.1]
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Short Title: Veterans/Health Care/Youth Suicide Prevention.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

April 26, 2017

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT TO DEVELOP A PILOT PROGRAM IN CUMBERLAND COUNTY TO
PROVIDE HEALTH CARE SERVICES TO VETERANS AND TO PROVIDE FOR A
TRAINING PROGRAM ON YOUTH SUICIDE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION
AND RISK REFERRAL PROTOCOL FOR SCHOOL PERSONNEL.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**PART I. PILOT PROGRAM TO PROVIDE HEALTH CARE SERVICES TO
VETERANS**

SECTION 1.(a) Pilot Program. – The Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, in coordination with Community Care of North Carolina and Maxim Healthcare Services, shall develop a two-year pilot program in Cumberland County to provide health care services to veterans. The pilot program shall consist of the following initiatives:

- (1) A health care initiative to provide to veterans increased access to health care resources through the care coordination efforts of community health workers.
- (2) A workforce initiative to recruit and train unemployed and underemployed veterans as community health workers for the health care initiative described in subdivision (1) of this section.

SECTION 1.(b) Report. - By March 1, 2018, the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs shall report to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services on the departments' planning activities for the pilot program authorized by this section. The report may include findings, recommendations, and legislative proposals.

SECTION 1.(c) This section is effective when it becomes law.

**PART II. TRAINING PROGRAM ON YOUTH SUICIDE AWARENESS AND
PREVENTION AND RISK REFERRAL PROTOCOL FOR SCHOOL PERSONNEL**

SECTION 2.(a) G.S. 115C-5 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

"(11) The term "public school unit" means a local school administrative unit, charter school, or regional school."

SECTION 2.(b) Article 25A of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

**"§ 115C-375.10. Youth suicide awareness and prevention training and risk referral
protocol for school personnel.**

(a) State Board Training Program and Protocol. – The State Board of Education, in consultation with the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health,



shall develop a youth suicide awareness and prevention training program and a model risk referral protocol for public school units to provide to school personnel who work directly with students in grades six through 12, including teachers, teacher assistants, bus drivers, cafeteria workers, janitorial staff, media coordinators, athletic coaches, administrators, administrative assistants, school safety resource officers, school nurses, social workers, psychologists, and counselors. The training program shall consist of at least two hours of evidence-informed instruction to increase awareness of suicide, identification of risk factors and signs, and information for student referral for suicide prevention resources and support. The model risk referral protocol shall provide guidelines to public school unit on identification of at-risk students, suicide prevention procedures, and referral sources. The training program and model risk referral protocol shall be periodically reviewed and updated as necessary. Any mental health training requirements established by the State Board of Education shall be fulfilled in part by the youth suicide awareness and prevention training program.

(b) Training and Protocol Requirements. – Each public school unit shall provide the training program and model risk referral protocol developed by the State Board of Education under subsection (a) of this section, or a locally developed plan that meets the requirements of subsection (c) of this section, to school personnel who work directly with students in grades six through 12 at no cost to the employee. A school employee who works directly with students in grades six through 12 shall receive training within 12 months of employment with a board of a public school unit and every two years thereafter while employed with that board. The training may be offered in various formats, including electronically, through videoconferencing, or through an individual program of study of designated materials consisting of at least two hours of instruction.

(c) Locally Developed Training and Risk Referral Protocols. – A board of a public school unit may comply with the training and protocol requirements of this section by developing a local plan that includes, at a minimum, (i) conveying information on State and national data on suicide deaths and attempts, suicide methods, and at-risk populations, (ii) myths and attitudes about suicide, (iii) warning signs and symptoms for suicide, (iv) identification of at-risk students and steps for referring students to support services, (v) protective factors for prevention of suicide, and (vi) safe messaging to children. In addition, a local plan shall include protocols for implementation and mandatory training that include at least the following:

- (1) A plan to include specialized training for student support personnel, including administrators, school nurses, counselors, social workers, and psychologists.
- (2) A safety plan for the school in the event of (i) identification of a student as being at-risk of suicide, including a student help plan and immediate assistance, and (ii) a suicide death or suicide attempt by a student enrolled in the school, including a care plan for peers and school personnel.
- (3) Designation of a school employee as the school suicide prevention responder.
- (4) A plan for communication with a parent or legal guardian of a student identified as at-risk, including safe transfer of the student to the parent or legal guardian.
- (5) A plan for post-intervention for a student who has been identified as at-risk or has attempted suicide, including reentry into the classroom.

(d) Audits. – The Department of Public Instruction shall periodically randomly audit public school units to ensure compliance with the mandatory training requirements and prevention activities required by this section. The Department may also audit a public school unit if the Department has reason to believe the public school unit is not in compliance. The Department of Public Instruction shall report on the results of the audits by December 15

1 annually to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services and the
2 Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee.

3 (e) Limitations. – Notwithstanding the requirements in subsection (a) of this section,
4 nothing in this section shall be construed to impose any obligation or responsibility on public
5 school units to provide referral, treatment, follow-up, or other services related to identification
6 of students at-risk of suicide and suicide prevention procedures beyond what may be required
7 by other State law or federal law.

8 (f) Liability. – No board of a public school unit, nor its members, employees,
9 designees, agents, or volunteers, shall be liable in civil damages to any party for any loss or
10 damage caused by any act or omission relating to the provision of, participation in, or
11 implementation of any component of the plan, referral protocol, or training program required
12 by this section, unless that act or omission amounts to gross negligence, wanton conduct, or
13 intentional wrongdoing. Nothing in this section shall be construed to impose any specific duty
14 of care or standard of care."

15 **SECTION 2.(c)** G.S. 115C-218.75 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

16 "(g) Youth Suicide Awareness and Prevention Training and Risk Referral Protocol. – A
17 charter school is subject to and shall comply with all requirements of G.S. 115C-375.10."

18 **SECTION 2.(d)** G.S. 115C-238.66 is amended by adding a new subdivision to
19 read:

20 "(14) Youth Suicide Awareness and Prevention Training and Risk Referral
21 Protocol. – A regional school is subject to and shall comply with all
22 requirements of G.S. 115C-375.10."

23 **SECTION 2.(e)** G.S. 116-239.8 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

24 "(17) Youth Suicide Awareness and Prevention Training and Risk Referral
25 Protocol. – A lab school is subject to and shall comply with all requirements
26 of G.S. 115C-375.10. For purposes of G.S. 115C-375.10, a lab school shall
27 be a public school unit."

28 **SECTION 2.(f)** This section is effective when it becomes law and applies
29 beginning with the 2018-2019 school year.

30 **PART III. EFFECTIVE DATE**

31 **SECTION 3.** Except as otherwise provided, this act is effective when it becomes
32 law.